



Manchester Regional Academy

Student/Parent Handbook

2013 ~ 2014

Bruce Thorndike, Principal

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MANCHESTER REGIONAL ACADEMY STUDENT PARENT HANDBOOK

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Title IX Notice

Title IX is a federal law which states: "No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal assistance."

Manchester's Title IX coordinator is: Teri Smith

45 North School Street

Manchester, CT 06042

Phone: 860-647-3595 ~ Fax: 860-647-5068

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of the Title IX for the school district & coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX in all areas covered by implementing regulations. The major responsibility is the prevention of sexual harassment & discrimination. It is the policy of Manchester public schools that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program; including educational & employment, because of race color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, mental retardation or past. present history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability.

2013 ~ 2014
MANCHESTER REGIONAL ACADEMY
Staff

Principal: Bruce Thorndike

Head Teacher: Jill Tallberg

Academic Teaching Staff

Brendan Ashe
Peter Ashe
Beverly Brooks
Kevin Brophy
Evan Chekas
Cindy Henderson
Kate Mertel
Ellen Schumey
Sharon Valyo
Leigh-Anne Young
Keri Zebrowski

Vocational Staff

Kenneth Andrews
Michael Carpenter
Ann Reimels
Martha Sanderfer
Jill Tallberg
Michael Villandry

Physical Education/Health

Michael Kakalow

Counseling Staff

Scott Goldsmith, School Psychologist
Liam Holmes, LCSW, School Social Worker
Douglas Klotzer, LCSW, School Social Worker

Speech & Language

Avery Chucta

Support Staff

Leslie Backbom – Paraprofessional
Russell Barnes - Paraprofessional
Kevin Boyle - Mediation Center Coordinator
Pat Brindamour - Paraprofessional
James Cochran – Custodian
Christine Munoz - Head Secretary
Joshua Philbrick – Autism Specialist
Marian Reid, RN – School Nurse

School Resource Officer

Officer Thomas McGowan

Special Services Liaison

Sarah Burke
Alexia Kalogianes

Transportation Coordinator

Debi Levesque

Board of Education Administration Contact Information

Superintendent - 860-647-3441
Asst. Superintendent - 860-647-3446
Pupil Personnel Services - 860-647-3452

INTRODUCTION

The **MANCHESTER REGIONAL ACADEMY** is a day school for students in grades 7 – 12, operated by the Manchester Public School System. The school has a capacity of 75 students.

The primary goal of this program is to help students who have had difficulty in more traditional school settings, to have a successful educational experience. A highly trained and experienced faculty and staff, a low student-to-teacher ratio, and strong academic, vocational, and therapeutic programs allow MRA to provide ample support, guidance, and structure for success. At MRA students learn new skills for achieving both socially and in the classroom. Many MRA students work toward a successful return to their high school or middle school within a year or two. For older students, the goal is to complete requirements for a high school diploma and prepare them for transition into the community and/or post secondary education.

MISSION OF MANCHESTER SCHOOLS

- The mission of the Manchester Public Schools is to ensure that students become responsible citizens who will be successful in a rapidly changing world.
- Through an active partnership of students, school personnel, families and the community, the Manchester Public Schools encourage learning from birth through graduation and beyond.
- As partners, we strive to create safe and inclusive schools defined by support for individual needs, respect for differences, integrity, and pride.
- We are committed to excellence in teaching and learning.
- We strongly value each student's capacity for high educational achievements.
- We empower students by helping them to attain the knowledge, skills, and values needed for success.

BELIEFS

6120

We believe that:

- A commitment to life-long learning begins at birth and extends beyond high school graduation.
- Schooling is a partnership that includes and values the family and the community.
- Every individual in the school-community-family partnership deserves respect.
- Every student deserves to learn in a school that is safe, supportive, and welcoming to diversity and individual differences.
- Students of all abilities are capable of higher academic achievements.
- Higher achievement results from high educational expectations, rigorous student programs and enthusiastic teaching and learning.
- An excellent education leads to graduation with skills, knowledge and values that exemplify a successful and contributing citizen.
- Excellence in teaching and learning requires a continuing commitment to staff support and professional development.
- We must fund our schools adequately and distribute funds equitably across schools and programs.
- The Manchester Public Schools will be recognized as an educational leader known for progress and innovation.

MANCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

6120

We will...

Accountability for Success

1. Implement high standards for teaching and learning, and hold staff accountable for empowering students to be successful in the classroom and beyond.

Access to Resources

2. Expand the capacity of the Manchester Public Schools to meet expectations by increasing the resources of the school system.

Promote Family Participation

3. Fully support and involve families as partners in encouraging their children's life-long learning.

Developing Attitude, Behavior, Character

4. Create a positive climate for learning that emphasizes appropriate attitudes, high standards of behavior, and the development of character and responsibility.

Build Student Ownership

5. Increase student ownership, involvement, and commitment to learning.

Ready the Children for School

6. Assure readiness for learning by expanding pre-kindergarten programs.

Reexamine Tradition and Structure

7. Evaluate and, where needed, implement new organizational structures to address the needs of students and their families.

Adopted: May 14, 1973

Revised: April 11, 1988

Revised: June 8, 1992

Revised: March 12, 2001

DESCRIPTION OF MRA PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Manchester Regional Academy places a high value on academic education. Students of all skill levels participate in daily classes covering all core disciplines.

The academic programs are designed to reflect those at the middle schools, and high school in Manchester. Students take courses including **English, Math, Social Studies, and Science**. Students needing specific courses such as **U.S. History** or **Biology** required for graduation can take it here.

Students who successfully complete courses at the secondary level while enrolled at **Manchester Regional Academy** accrue credits as they would at Manchester High School or their hometown high school. All courses lead to a diploma from the student's high school.

In addition to academic classes and vocational classes, all students participate in physical education.

The High School Partnership Program is available to students who meet the eligibility criteria, are accepted to the college after applying, and who pass the admission's test. Qualified students may take credit or non-credit courses at the Manchester Community College campus, which is adjacent to the Academy.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

The primary vocational goal is to help students take steps toward achieving economic and social independence. All students explore vocational careers through hands-on classes and career awareness seminars. Although the vocational program is primarily exploratory, students can learn basic and advanced marketable skills for entry-level employment positions and are encouraged to seek further specific training or education.

In the **Computer Education** area, students learn word processing, research, internet, and keyboarding skills. In the **Culinary Arts** program, students explore basic and advanced concepts in restaurant and cafeteria food preparation under the direction of a professional chef. In the **Mechanics** area, students learn basic technology concepts, small engine repair, and introductory mechanics. The **Woodworking** classes teach students to use hand and power equipment proficiently, to interpret and read a blueprint, and to successfully complete projects through the medium of wood.

The vocational program also includes interest testing, occupational exploration, job shadowing, on-the-job training, job seeking skills, and vocational counseling. All programs are designed to help a student explore a wide-range of occupational interests, to learn specific strategies in conducting a job search and successfully maintaining a job. Students also explore options for further training in the future.

Our **Vocational Counselors** place students in volunteer training or competitive work sites depending on the proficiency level of the student. Through work experience, the student gains self-confidence, develops appropriate work habits and attitudes, and learns specific job skills. Short-term volunteer or work training experiences facilitate an easier transition from school to the work world.

Referrals to agencies such as the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services are arranged for seniors by the Vocational Counselor.

Through course work during the later part of the senior year graduating seniors are given assistance with transition planning. Resume preparation, letters of recommendation, and work training are emphasized.

BEHAVIORAL PROGRAM

In order to obtain the maximum benefit from an educational program, students must learn to manage their own behavior successfully. Since most students arrive at our school with difficulties in self-management of behavior, the Academy program is designed to guide student behavior through the use of external supports and structure, with the goal being for students to internalize the skills learned.

A token economy or "level system" provides feedback to students to help them adopt appropriate behavior and classroom performance. Upon reaching the appropriate behavioral level, students can earn privileges such as an activity period, special luncheons, special activities, field trips and even early release from school (with parent permission). A point sheet is used to track point accumulation.

In some cases, an individual behavior plan may be developed for a student who demonstrates frequent inappropriate behaviors. Students who are chronically disruptive may be placed in a more restricted program.

Self-management skills are taught in every classroom and through our Mediation Center. Students are counseled regarding their behavior and taught self-evaluation skills. Emphasis is placed on developing strategies for coping with daily stressors and on resolving conflicts. Counseling and support are continuously available through the Mediation Center.

Some behaviors (smoking, disrespect, minor physical conflicts, and repeated disruptions) may require other measures such as parent conference or last period detention.

Serious behavior incidents (assault, theft, drug possession, property destruction) may result in out-of-school suspensions followed by placement in restriction upon returning to school. Such behaviors may also result in criminal charges and possibly a recommendation for expulsion.

Please refer to Appendix B for the Board of Education Policy on Discipline.

MEDIATION CENTER

Students who have conflicts with peers, have issues with staff or have any concern that is preventing them from being successful in class may report to the Mediation Center for assistance. Students who exhibit disruptive behavior in class may be required to report to the Mediation Center for a time-out and to work at resolving the issue. Generally a visit to Mediation is for ten minutes, until the student has been able to "regroup" so to return to the regular environment. Mediation staff also facilitates something called "closure", where students learn to take responsibility for their behavior and resolve conflicts with others.

ROPES CHALLENGE COURSE

Ropes Challenge Course activities have been integrated into the MRA program. The course involves a series of activities designed to challenge students to work cooperatively in a group and to take personal risks within the safety of a structured activity. Students meet these challenges in a playful, non-threatening setting. Ropes Course activities build self-esteem, increase personal confidence, develop cooperative learning skills and promote leadership skills. Although these activities are scheduled through Physical Education classes, they are multi-disciplinary and therapeutic as they develop characteristics that lead to success in academics as well as social and physical areas.

THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM

The Counseling Support Staff, Mediation Center Staff, and Advisors are an integral part of the school's therapeutic environment.

Each student has a primary counselor/case manager. Individual counseling is provided in response to each student's **Individual Education Program (I.E.P.)**. In times of crisis or particular need, additional individual counseling is available.

The individual counselor, as case manager, coordinates the student's overall program. This may include consultation with staff, parents, and other agencies and therapists who may be involved.

All students are assigned to a Homeroom group that meets every day. In homeroom, students set and evaluate daily goals, learn social skills, engage in activities that enhance their bonding to the school, staff, and to each other, and work on school improvement projects. Once each week a school counselor joins the teacher and together they run a group therapy session.

Other groups focusing on special needs or issues are offered throughout the year. Some examples are Women's Group, Substance Abuse Group. And Men's Group.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Twice monthly the high school student body and staff meet in a large circular format for Community Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to foster a sense of community among the MRA population. General announcements and calendar events are shared; individual students are recognized for progress or special accomplishments in an activity called *Spotlight*. Frequently, students and staffed are challenged to participate in a fun activity from our Ropes Course curriculum with the focus being on problem solving, group cohesion, cooperation, and teamwork.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order to provide all students with continuity of instructional experience, Manchester Regional Academy recognizes the importance of consistent attendance and requires that all students attend school on scheduled days. Frequent absenteeism, regardless of the reason, is detrimental to the overall learning experience. **It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to monitor the attendance of their sons and daughters.** The school provides continuous information that will help the families monitor attendance.

All students until age 18 must attend school. However, if a 16 or 17 year old student wishes to withdraw from school, the parent or guardian must appear personally at the school office and sign a withdrawal form. Students age 17 and under will be referred to juvenile court for excessive unexcused absences.

MRA Attendance Policy 2013 - 2014 School Year

- Attendance will be calculated on a quarterly basis and reset at the beginning of each quarter.
- Absences will **NOT** be marked excused or unexcused.
- The school will notify parents when a student is not in school.
- Students are not penalized for the first 5 absences, but every absence after the 5th will result in a Red Day.
- Students are allowed up to 7 absences per quarter, regardless of the reason.
- Every 5 tardies will be considered 1 absence. A tardy is defined as arriving to school after 8:20, regardless of the reason.
- When the 8th absence occurs, the student will **lose credit for the quarter**.
- Students may “erase” up to 2 absences per quarter. The student can erase the first absence by earning 5 consecutive Green Days, either in the current or subsequent quarter. If a student wants to erase the second absence, they need to earn 10 consecutive Green Days either in the current or subsequent quarter.
- The school nurse will send a letter home when a student has reached 5 absences and will send a second letter if the student reaches 8 absences within a given quarter.
- Attendance will also be tracked on Interim Progress Reports and Report Cards quarterly.
- Once a student has 10 or more absences per quarter, earning Green Days to recover credit is not an option. Credit is lost for the quarter.
- Credit recovery appeals for special circumstances/exceptions to the attendance policy must be made in writing to the administration by the end of the following quarter in which they occur.
- It is recommended that parents and students have documentation of absences when applying for credit recovery. A parent may request a PPT/parent meeting at any point in the year to discuss credit restoration.
- Religious holidays do not count as absences for loss of credit purposes.

How Absences Impact Your Credit Status and How To Fix It When You Lose Credit

<u>Absences</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Recourse</u>
<i>Excused and Unexcused</i>	<i>How does this affect you?</i>	<i>What can you do to fix it?</i>
5 or less	None! You are safe!	
6 or more	Red Days for every absence	None
8	<i>Credit is lost!!!</i>	Earn 5 Green Days
9	<i>Credit is lost!!!</i>	Earn 10 Green Days
10	<i>Credit is lost!!!</i>	<i>Credit cannot be recovered!!!</i>

Parents are urged to schedule any family vacations in accordance with the established school calendar for the year. The school is not responsible for providing any alternate education experience during such absences.

The parents of pupils with continuing poor attendance or tardiness will be requested to come in for a school conference which could involve teacher(s), social worker, administrators and other appropriate staff. Every effort will be made to provide support to the pupil and parent to ensure good school attendance.

GRADING POLICY

Teachers grade students based on a formula considering **daily classroom performance, test and quiz scores, project completion and homework completion, and attendance**. Work missed due to excused absences can be made up within a week of the absence. Work missed due to unexcused absence cannot be made up. *It is possible that a student may get a passing grade in a class, but lose credit due to unexcused absences.*

At the Manchester Regional Academy, students earn half credits and full credits for courses taken. Quarterly grades are averaged to arrive at a final grade for the year. Grades from sending schools are factored into final grade points; consideration is given to students who transition in to MRA and show significant progress as the year progresses.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Homebound instruction can be provided in the event of a long-term illness or incapacity that prevents the student from attending school. Contact the school counselor for more information.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a regular expectation for all students. Contact the teacher with questions about homework.

HONOR ROLL

To qualify for the High Honor Roll students must achieve a B+ or better average. The General Honor Roll requires a B average. An F, D, or Incomplete will prevent a student from achieving Honor Roll placement.

PLANNING AND PLACEMENT TEAM MEETING - ANNUAL REVIEW

Parents of Special Education Students can request a PPT at any time. At least one PPT must be held each year. It is very important for parents to attend every PPT meeting.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Midway through each quarter a progress report is mailed home. Teachers will indicate whether work is outstanding (A), above average (B), average (C), marginal (D), or unsatisfactory (F) and comments.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued after the end of each quarter (see calendar). Quarter letter grades are given as follows:

A=superior; B=above average; C=average; D=below average, but passing; F=failure, no credit; Inc=incomplete; P=Pass; W=Withdrawn from course. A grade of "AL", "BL", "CL", "DL", indicates a passing grade, but loss of credit due to unexcused absences.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Promotion/Retention/Acceleration

The Manchester Public Schools are dedicated to the total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to their academic, social, and emotional level.

The Manchester Public School System establishes and reviews performance standards that clearly communicate to parents, students, and teachers the district's high expectations for learning. The standards are measured continuously with high quality curriculum-based assessments that accurately

measure student progress and growth over time, leading toward mastery of the concepts, skills, and content that are identified for key grade levels.

Performance measurements provide information for specific instructional assistance and adjustment for identified students, that:

- ❖ emphasize early mastery of literacy and numeracy;
- ❖ provide for extended learning time for students who do not meet standards during the regular school year/programs;
- ❖ focus support during key grade level transitional experiences and for students whose schooling experience has been effected by high mobility;
- ❖ clearly inform parents and offer training and outreach so that parents can support literacy and learning within the home;
- ❖ are supported by continuous teacher professional development in current research-based instructional practices.

Adopted: June 24, 1985
Revised: January 24, 1994
Revised: September 28, 1998
Revised: June 26, 2000

References: Connecticut Public Act 99-288
Connecticut General Statutes 10-221h (Early Reading Success)
Connecticut General Statutes 10-221a (High School Graduation Requirements)
State of Connecticut Common Core of Learning
State of Connecticut K-12 Curriculum Frameworks
State of Connecticut Testing Program
Manchester Board of Education Strategic Plan (Accountability for Success)

Kindergarten Through Entering Grade 9:

Teachers and administrators determine student placement in grade and in specific instructional assistance programs through comprehensive review of the student's performance data. The guiding criteria in all decisions are the student's adjustment and the student's optimum progress toward proficiency demonstrated on performance measurements of district standards.

Local and national longitudinal data show that students, promoted without regard to achievement, tend to fall even farther behind their classmates as they move through school. Conversely, retention in grade greatly increases the likelihood that a student will drop out of school. Therefore, retention in grade, if it is necessary, is more appropriate in primary grades rather than in later grades.

The decision as to pupil placement shall be made by the school principal in accordance with the procedures outlined below. The decision will be made after careful analysis of student performance data:

- ❖ Ongoing teacher observation;
- ❖ Standards-based performance assessments and integrated benchmarked book performance, used to establish a student's proficiency in decoding and comprehension;
- ❖ Ongoing timed math facts proficiency tests and district-wide curriculum-based mathematics tests, used to establish a student's proficiency in numeracy;
- ❖ Connecticut State Testing Program data;
- ❖ Student attendance;

❖ Social adjustment.

Students who do not meet proficiency on district performance assessments are expected to participate in specific instructional assistance programs.

Any teacher who feels that a child should be considered for non-promotion or acceleration should, after consulting with the principal, confer with the parent(s)/guardians(s). These consultations should take place between December and April or earlier if a student demonstrates difficulty with learning prior to that time period.

If non-promotion or acceleration seems to be in the best interest of the child, the parents/guardians must be asked to attend a special conference to discuss the school's recommendation.

After the parents have been apprised of the school's recommendations, they are requested to sign a form indicating their agreement or disagreement with the decision. In most cases, a decision on non-promotion or acceleration should be made prior to the end of the school year. However, if the student completes a summer school program, the principal and parents may discuss the student placement decision again at the beginning of the next school year.

The appeal of a decision may be carried to the Superintendent.

Middle School Grades and Requirements for Entrance to Grade 9:

It is the philosophy of Manchester Middle Schools that we must provide academic support structures to extend learning opportunities for students who do not meet the standards and academic responsibilities during the regular school year or school hours. It is expected that any Grade 6 or Grade 7 student, who has not successfully completed an academic course during the regular school year, will attend summer school.

To enroll in grade 9, a student must have a passing end-of-year grade in three of the four full year academic courses (Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). A student who may be retained will be evaluated by teachers, administrators, and guidance personnel at the middle and high schools based on the criteria outlined below.

To attain a passing end-of-year grade, students must earn a minimum passing grade of a D+ in at least two quarters of the year. At least one of the quarters the student has passed must occur during the second semester. A student who has maintained a minimum of a D in all four quarters will be considered as earning a passing end-of-year grade.

Therefore, during the summer after the grade 8 regular program, any student who does not fulfill the above-stated criteria must attend a summer school program in the failed academic course(s). This program is organized to foster skills for success in high school. A student must receive passing grades in the summer school courses and must adhere to all summer school regulations in order to complete the summer school program. After successfully completing this intensive academic preparatory program, the student will be enrolled in grade nine.

If non-promotion or acceleration seems to be in the best interest of the student, the parents/guardians must be asked to attend a special conference to discuss the school's recommendation. These consultations should take place between December and May or earlier if a student demonstrates difficulty with learning prior to that time period.

In most cases, a decision on non-promotion or acceleration should be made prior to the end of the school year. However, if the student successfully completes a summer program, the principal, guidance counselor, and parents may discuss the student placement decision again at the beginning of the next school year.

Requirements for Graduation from Manchester High School and Manchester Regional Academy:

Twenty-two credits in Grades 9-12 are required for graduation in Manchester. This must include a minimum of the following core requirements:

- 4.0 credits in English (to include Language Arts, Sophomore English, American Literature, and Senior English)
- 3.5 credits in Social Studies (Grade 9 and 10 – 2 credits in required courses in Global Issues and Modern World History; 1 credit in U.S. History; and ½ credit in Grade 12 Participation in American Society course, or Law electives)
- 2.5 credits in Science (to include Earth Science, Biological, and Physical Science)
- 3.0 credits in Mathematics
- 1.2 credits in Physical Education
- 1.5 credits in Fine Arts (Art, Music) or Vocational Education
- 6.3 credits must be earned in addition to the core requirements. Section 10-19 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that each student attend a drug education course each year in Grades K-12. Students may earn .10 credit in Drug Education for each quarter passed (a total of .30 credits upon successful completion of the required Health course.)

GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION: Students will not be automatically promoted to the next grade. The number of credits a student has earned by the end of summer school will be used to determine his/her grade classification:

Grade 10	4 credits
Grade 11	8 credits
Grade 12	14 credits

MID-YEAR GRADUATION FOR SENIORS: Students who can complete all graduation requirements by the end of the first semester of the senior year, may leave Manchester Regional Academy at that time.

To qualify for a diploma, a **TRANSFER** student must be in attendance at least the entire second semester of the senior year and must meet all graduation requirements.

Reference: 5127.1 Specific Unit Requirements for Graduation from Manchester High School
 5127.11 External Credit Options Meeting Manchester High School Graduation Requirements
 Connecticut Public Act 99-288
 Connecticut General Statutes 10-221h (Early Reading Success)
 Connecticut General Statutes 10-221a (High School Graduation Requirements)
 Connecticut General Statutes 10-19 (Teaching about Substance Abuse)
 State of Connecticut Common Core of Learning
 State of Connecticut K-12 Curriculum Frameworks
 State of Connecticut Testing Program
 Manchester Board of Education Strategic Plan (Accountability for Success)

Adopted:	June 24, 1985
Revised:	January 24, 1994
Revised:	September 28, 1998
Revised:	June 26, 2000

CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST (CAPT)

All eligible tenth grade students take the CAPT test annually in the spring. The CAPT assesses skills in language arts, math, science, and writing. Students who do not meet proficiency level will be required to re-test the following year. Proficiency level is a requirement for graduation.

GRADE 7 and 8 MASTERY TESTING (CMT)

All grade 7 and 8 students in Connecticut take the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) in the spring. The results of this test may be reviewed with your son/daughter's teachers or counselor.

SUMMER SCHOOL

The school district will conduct a summer school program each year. Summer school provides an opportunity for students to recover credit that has been lost in academic courses.

The Board of Education will each year, at its first meeting in January, establish the fees for all summer school courses. The Superintendent of Schools will recommend to the Board of Education a fee structure for summer school programs.

Adopted: November 13, 1973

TRANSITION

Many of our students have the goal of returning to their own high school and, in many cases, they are successful. In order to be recommended for return to a regular school, students must achieve their goals. They should demonstrate good attendance (meet the attendance requirements of their home school district), and should be on Green Level or Off Level for 80% of the time or more while attending MRA.

TRANSPORTATION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTACTS**BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Manchester students attending MRA are provided with transportation by the Manchester Board of Education. Students from other towns are provided with transportation by the Board of Education of the town in which they live. Students are required to use that transportation unless parents provide written authorization to use other means such as walking, riding a bike, or taking a public bus. In that case, parents must sign a consent form which releases the school from any liability (see transportation liability release form). Students will not be allowed to ride other school vehicles. Parents and students should be aware that bus companies will not allow students from another town to ride their vehicles. i.e., students from one town will not be authorized to ride transportation vehicles provided by another town. School rules are enforced on the bus. Students who are reported for unsafe behavior, smoking, or disorderly conduct on the bus may be suspended from the bus or receive other disciplinary consequences. Seatbelts must be worn whenever instructed to do so.

BOE Transportation Office: -Debi Levesque, Transportation Coordinator, Telephone 647-3476. This office handles transportation requests and will assist you with any problems or concerns you have regarding your child's transportation. During late August, September and into October, our phone line is very busy. Please assist us in expediting calls by leaving a brief, clear message. **It will be most helpful if you spell your name, be sure to leave a phone number and allow us one full business day to respond to your call. Keep in mind transportation changes may take up to two weeks to process.** You may send email to dlevesque@ci.manchester.ct.us.

First Student Transportation: Dispatcher 643-2373. The bus company should be notified if your child will be absent from a van (only). You do not need to call if your child will be absent from the bus.

Transportation to and from school is a privilege. The Manchester Board of Education expects all students to obey the rules and regulations as set forth by the Board and to be aware that inappropriate behavior may result in suspension of bus/van privileges.

It is essential that students are aware that the safety of all students traveling on a school bus depends on each student acting appropriately. Inappropriate behavior of one student can have serious consequences for all students.

Students will contribute to an atmosphere of courtesy and respect on the school bus, as in the classroom, and recognize that the bus driver has the same authority on the bus as the teacher has in the classroom.

Before contacting us, please review the information we have provided in this packet. This is the policy as set forth by the Board and we cannot make exceptions.

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS:

Contact Mrs. Asaro, RN, the MRA School Nurse.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY:

Parents should make sure that children reach the school bus stop at least five minutes before the scheduled bus pick up.

Parents should instruct children to:

Walk facing traffic, if they must walk on the roadway.

Look both ways before crossing the roadway.

Wait on the shoulder, off the pavement.

Wait until the bus stops before trying to board. Children must not rush onto the bus.

Behave appropriately walking to and from and while at the bus stop.

Follow the bus behavior rules.

No eating is allowed on Vans and Busses.

90-MINUTE DELAYS (1 hour and 30 minutes) FOR STUDENTS IN THE DISTRICT.

All delayed openings in Manchester are 90-minute delays. Manchester Regional Academy begins at 9:30 AM on days of delay. During bad weather, you may obtain cancellation or delayed opening information by tuning in to: WTIC AM/FM, WRCH, WZMX, WHCN, WKSS, WWYZ, WDRC AM/FM and WFSB (CH 3) WTNH (CH 8) WVIT (CH 30).

Students should be waiting outside. Van transportation is curb to curb. Vans will not go into driveways or on private property. Vans will not wait for students or blow their horn. If your child requires assistance getting on or off the van or requires supervision, it is your responsibility to make sure someone is there to assist the student.

The driver cannot leave the driver's seat. Vans will not wait.

If your student is going to be absent, please call the dispatch office answering machine at 643-2373. When you call, leave your student's name, school and the van number so that the van will not be cancelled. The van will be cancelled if the student is absent for 5 consecutive days, and you have not called.

If you move, the Board of Education must have your new address and date of move as soon as possible as changes can take one to two weeks for implementation. For address changes we will need-- Student name, grade, school, old address, new address, bus or van number: Special Education transportation students should notify Special Ed. Department at 647-3484. All others should call the Transportation Coordinator at 647-3476.

BUS BEHAVIOR RULES

Riding the bus to school is a privilege, and in order to ensure safety for all Students and drivers, the guidelines stated in this page must be observed.

Please review this bus plan carefully, and discuss the importance of appropriate behavior on the bus with your child. Students not observing these safety guidelines may lose their bus privileges.

Parents/Guardians, principals and drivers have an important role to play as well, and it is vitally important that everyone involved communicate any bus Issues so that they can be resolved quickly.

STUDENTS RIDING THE BUS WILL:

- **Speak politely to the bus driver at all times.**
- **Find the next available seat.**
- **Remain seated for the entire time on the bus, keeping their feet out of the aisles.**
- **Keep all personal belongings inside their backpacks.**
- **Refrain from shouting on the bus or from shouting out of the windows.**
- **No eating is allowed on vans or busses.**
- **Tell the bus driver or the teacher if there is a problem on the bus.**
- **Fasten seat belts, if provided.**

GENERAL INFORMATION/GENERAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Low cost accident insurance is available for students. See the information and forms packet sent home when school starts for more information.

ACCIDENTS/INJURIES

Report all accidents and injuries to the school nurse immediately.

ATHLETICS

Students may be eligible to try out for their high school sports teams. Interested students should check with their counselor.

AWOL

A student who leaves school without permission will receive behavioral consequences. Parents will be notified and the police may be called if the student may represent a danger to themselves or others. Consequences and/or an appropriate course of action will be considered to address the behavior.

CAFETERIA

The Manchester Regional Academy offers a full lunch program. The Culinary Arts classes prepare nutritious meals under the supervision of the Culinary Arts staff. Students may purchase a complete meal or bring a lunch. Food is not to be eaten in the classrooms or corridors under any circumstances unless permission has been received from the teacher. Free and reduced lunch programs are available for qualified students. All students are entitled to purchase a daily lunch or breakfast as it appears on the menu during hours when the lunch line is open. Students who misbehave in the cafeteria may be restricted to eating in another area. In some cases, students do not arrive at school in time to eat breakfast prior to class. These students should eat at home.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

All foods and beverages must be consumed in the cafeteria only. Students may not drink coffee, sodas, or other beverages or eat snacks or other foods in the halls or classrooms. The only exception to this is for students placed in Mediation at lunch time, the CARE program or for occasional classroom or team events with the express permission of the Principal.

DANGEROUS & INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS NOT ALLOWED IN SCHOOL

Dangerous and Inappropriate Items Prohibited: In general, students should only bring to school those items which have an educational purpose and use in school. While a comprehensive list of dangerous items can never be compiled, the following items are banned from school:

GUNS, MATCHES, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, FIRECRACKERS, SLING SHOTS, CAP GUNS, WATER BALLOONS, BOX CUTTERS, FACSIMILES OF A WEAPON, CIGARETTE LIGHTERS, RAZOR BLADES, KNIVES, WATER PISTOLS, BB GUNS, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, PLAYING CARDS, CHAINS, SPIT BALLS, MACE OR MACE-LIKE SUBSTANCES, DRUG PARAPHERNALIA, STINK BOMBS, CAPS AND/OR POPPERS, DRUG FACSIMILES.

DRESS CODE

It is the responsibility of each student to know and follow to MRA Dress Code. The dress code at Manchester Regional Academy has been developed and revised over the years for the purpose of reaffirming our focus on learning and to eliminate needless distractions and safety hazards. **Student attire will reflect respect for self and others in addition to a responsible attitude toward study.**

Manchester Regional Academy prohibits the following from being worn during the academic school day:

1. Coats, jackets or other attire normally worn as outerwear. Outerwear includes: coats, jackets, windbreakers, down vests, gloves and other clothing the administration deems inappropriate.
2. Head or face coverings of any kind. Coverings worn as part of a student's religious practice or belief shall not be prohibited under this policy, but such items must be approved by the religious leader of the congregation (clergy, etc.). Head or face coverings shall not be worn, carried, hung around belts or around neck or kept in the classroom during regular school hours. This includes headbands, "doo-rags", and scarves. No pajamas, slippers, or curlers allowed.
3. **All items described above must be secured in the student's locker before school.** If not, these items will be confiscated by the principal, teachers, or monitors.
4. See-through clothing, shirts and/or blouses which reveal the abdomen, chest, or undergarments are not allowed. Pants must be worn so that underclothing is not showing.

5. Shorts, miniskirts, or pants which reveal the upper thigh or undergarments are not allowed. Spandex garments are allowed only if covered by appropriate shorts or skirts.
6. Sunglasses are not to be worn in the building.
7. Attire or accessories – including book bags – which contain offensive or disruptive writings or pictures likely to disrupt the educational environment, or attire and/or accessories which depict logo or emblems that encourage the use of drugs, tobacco products, or alcoholic beverages or gang affiliation.
8. Spiked or studded bracelets, oversized or multi-finger rings, piercings, belts or any other article of attire with spikes or spikes attached, or any other clothing item that may present a safety hazard to student, other students or staff.
9. Any other items which present a disruption to the school environment and/or to the learning environment.

Students should come to school dressed in a way that allows everyone to concentrate on learning. **Students who do not follow the dress requirements listed above may be sent home and/or suspended.**

Vocational departments, Physical Education and the Science departments reserve the right to require specific clothing, footwear, and safety equipment for the protection of students in those courses. We may also prohibit unsafe clothing or accessories.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL

Drugs/Alcohol are prohibited: Board of Education policy prohibits drugs, alcohol possession in school or coming to school under their influence. Students who possess or distribute drugs or alcohol on school grounds are subject to full disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion and arrest. Distribution of drugs or alcohol off school grounds may be grounds for disciplinary action by the school as well. See detailed Board of Education policy on Drugs and Alcohol (Appendix A).

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The following electronic devices should not be brought to school: cell phones, MP3 players, any gaming devices such as gameboys & PSP's, pagers, laser pointers, walkie talkies, or 2-way radios, radios. They will be confiscated and held for pick-up by a parent. If repeated violations occur, additional disciplinary consequences will be applied (See Appendix B) Students who bring walkman type CD players and walkman type cassette players, iPods, or other electronic devices to school must lock them in their locker for the school day. Teachers may allow their use in certain class activities. *The school will not be responsible for these items. Students are encouraged to leave all valuables at home.*

CELL PHONES

It is understood that many parents allow their students to carry cell phones outside of school. When in school, students are required to store cell phones out of view. Cell phones must be turned off before entering the building. If a student is seen to be carrying a cell phone, the phone will be confiscated and held for a parent to pick up. Repeated violations may result in additional disciplinary consequences. Students who are on the highest level of the level system may use their cell phone during the lunch period.

EMERGENCY CARD INFORMATION

Board of Education policy #5125.1, adopted in April 1989, **requires that parents provide and maintain accurate emergency information** for any student attending Manchester public schools.

Change of Address/Telephone: Parents are asked to inform the school secretary of any change in address or telephone numbers. Such changes may be written on a note or called in to the Main Office. MRA also requires that parents keep school staff informed of changes in home, work, and emergency telephone numbers so that we can reach parents/guardians when necessary.

FUNDRAISING

Selling, fundraising, trading is prohibited. Only school authorized fundraising may be done by students at MRA. Students are prohibited from buying, selling or trading personal items or borrowing and lending money in school.

FIELD TRIPS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Many field trips and special activities are scheduled throughout the year during the school day. Parent permission is required for any off-grounds activity. All school rules and regulations apply to the extra-curricular activities, both on and off the campus.

Students may be eligible to participate in activities and athletic programs at their home high school. Questions regarding a student's eligibility should be addressed to the MRA principal or their home school principal.

Students who are on suspension are not allowed to participate in special activities, including athletics.

GANG-RELATED BEHAVIOR

The administration of Manchester Regional Academy, in an effort to insure a safe and secure learning environment, foster an attitude of respect for the rights of others, adopts a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** towards gang-related behavior. Violation of this policy will lead to suspension and/or expulsion from Manchester Regional Academy.

Manchester Regional Academy has identified gang-type activity and/or gang involvement as:

1. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, graffiti, or other items that are evidence of membership in or affiliation with a gang.
2. Committing any act or using any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.). Showing membership in or affiliation with a gang.
3. Using any speech or committing any act to further the interest of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to:
 - Soliciting and/or initiating others for membership in any gang.
 - Requesting any person to pay for protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person.
 - Committing any illegal act or violation of school district policies.
 - Inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.
 - Engaging in concert with others in intimidating, fighting, assaulting, or threatening.

The school provides counselors and a social worker on campus to help develop a sense of self-esteem and provide information and guidance for students. Students are expected to do what is ethically right at all times within the school community.

HARASSMENT

Verbal, sexual, physical harassment, racial and ethnic slurs are unacceptable. See Appendix C for details.

INSUBORDINATION

Refusal to follow reasonable directions from staff and the administration is very serious. A typical example of insubordination is a student refusing to go to the Mediation Center when directed to do so, or refusal to leave a classroom area. Insubordination may result in behavioral consequences.

LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned a locker and a lock. Lockers are school property and subject to inspection if the administration has reasonable suspicion that Board of Education policy may have been violated. No other locks may be used. Lockers should be kept locked at all times when not in use. Students should use their own locker and should not share the locker with anyone or divulge their locker combination to anyone.

Students should not bring valuables or large amounts of cash to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

PARKING

Student drivers who have reached *Green Level* or *Off Level* status may park at school with advanced permission. See the Principal for details.

PASSES

Students must have a written pass when leaving their assigned area. Students who are in unassigned areas without permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

Physical aggression is unacceptable in school. Fighting and assaults will result in criminal charges as well as school disciplinary measures. Threatening may result in criminal charges as well. See Appendix B for details.

SCHOOL RECORDS

School records are available to parents and guardians upon request. The official Board of Education policy on access to records and record retention is available in the principal's office.

SMOKING PROHIBITED

Smoking and possession of smoking materials in school, on school grounds, on a school trip, or in the vicinity of school are prohibited. In addition to school disciplinary consequences, offenders may be subject to a fine of \$50.00 for a first offense and \$100.00 for every time thereafter. All smoking materials will be confiscated.

TELEPHONE USE

Urgent incoming phone messages will be given to students. Students may use a school phone **ONLY WITH PERMISSION FROM THE COUNSELOR OR PRINCIPAL.**

VANDALISM

Vandalism and deliberate property destruction will result in criminal charges. See Board of Education Discipline policy for details. Restitution in the form of cash payment or work for the school will be required for damage to school property.

VISITORS

Adult visitors are welcome, but they must report to the office for permission from the principal to visit classes or any area of the school. For your convenience please call ahead of time for an appointment. Students may not bring friends or siblings to school for the day.

WORKING PAPERS

Students needing working papers should see the Vocational Counselor for details.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS

(See Appendix B for details)

Ultimately we trust that students will display appropriate social behavior and work hard to achieve academic success because it is important to them. All Academy students work toward individual social, behavioral, and academic goals. Students are guided to self-evaluate their achievement of these goals. They may be encouraged toward these goals through a level system with rewards and consequences, use of a daily planner, daily goal sheets, a daily report card, advisory group discussions, and counseling sessions. Specific strategies will vary depending on the individual needs of a student.

CONTINUUM OF BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES

Disciplinary consequences will be applied in a consistent manner. The severity of consequences may vary depending on the frequency, intensity, and seriousness of infractions. Individual disciplinary plans may be developed with special individualized consequences.

Disciplinary consequences may include: verbal warning; time-out; removal from class; loss of privileges; lunch detention; after-school detention; restricted placement; in-school suspension; out of school suspension; and ultimately, removal from the program. Criminal behavior (fighting, assault, drug possession, weapons possession, sexual harassment, public disturbance, vandalism, ethnic/racial harassment) will result in a referral to the Police Department as well as school disciplinary consequences.

Parent conferences in person and by phone may be required. Serious or repetitive infractions may require a PPT meeting.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

The MRA staff is annually trained and certified in non-violent crisis intervention techniques which includes verbal de-escalation and physical restraint. Although physical restraint will be used only as a last resort, the administration reserves the right to physically restrain a student who represents a safety concern to themselves, others, or who seriously disrupts the school environment. See Board of Education Discipline policy (see Seclusion and Restraint policy, in this handbook)

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Board of Education policy details the schools right to search students when it is deemed necessary for reasons as described in Board of Education policy and sanctioned by Connecticut State Law. Given suspicion that a student may be in possession of a dangerous weapon, drugs, alcohol or other prohibited material, the administration will conduct a search of the student(s) person, their locker, book bags, coats.

CAREER PORTFOLIO

During the Senior year, students will develop a career portfolio under the guidance of the vocational counselors and the MRA staff. The career portfolio may include the following: a resume of high school experiences including a description of school, community, and employment experiences, recommendations from counselors and teachers, a transcript of high school courses, and an attendance report.

COUNSELING

Each student is assigned a counselor/case-manager. The counselor is the main contact for non-academic issues the student/ family may have. Individual and group counseling is provided as needed and as required by the PPT. Parent concerns regarding the emotional status and behavior of a student should be addressed to the counselor. Students should seek out their counselor whenever they have concerns or problems.

COUNSELING: VOCATIONAL, CAREER

Vocational counselors are available at MRA to work with students on their career skills, vocational plans, job placement and post graduation plans and placements. Students will take interest surveys, visit appropriate job sites and schools, and participate in an exploratory vocational program at MRA. Students may be eligible to participate in work-study programs. Interested students should see the vocational counselor for details.

CARE PROGRAM:

Choosing Alternative Responses to Events

CARE Program is an intervention that is used when students are inconsistently abiding by the structures that we have in place at MRA to maintain a safe and orderly environment and to maintain growth and progress. Students in CARE work with staff to process their behavior, take responsibility for their behavior, and develop a plan to be more successful upon their return to the regular classroom. CARE is designed to be a short-term intervention in which students can work through the issues of concern, complete their academic work, and exit the program in one school day.

When a student is placed on a CARE Plan it is an indication that student has somehow gotten "off track" and they need assistance getting back "on track".

The decision to place a student on a CARE Plan is made by the student's counselor, case manager and the administrator. When this decision is made, the student's parent is notified as is the MRA principal.

CARE allows student to receive individualized attention, to spend time processing problem areas and concerns, and to develop a plan for re-entry into the regular environment.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

HEALTH OFFICE

The health and safety of our students are of utmost concern and require close cooperation between parents/guardians and the school nurse. The school nurse is available all day at M.R.A. if you have any health issues or concerns that you would like to discuss. Please help keep us informed by following the instructions below.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE ASKED TO CALL THE SCHOOL:

- A. If a student will be absent.
- B. If a student needs to be excluded from Physical Education due to injury, illness, or other health condition. A doctor's note may be required for a student to return to physical education classes after recovery from an illness or injury.
- C. To record any change in the student information data (address, home or business telephone number, etc.)
- D. If we are unaware that a student has:
 - 1. Been diagnosed with a long-term disorder (i.e., convulsions, diabetes, etc.)
 - 2. Been placed on daily medications.
 - 3. Had severe, known reactions to allergens (i.e., bee stings, food, etc.)
 - 4. Had surgery
 - 5. Had a physical examination (forms are available for the examining doctor to complete)
 - 6. Had hearing or sight tested, and to report the results of the test.
 - 7. A communicable disease (i.e., strep throat, chicken pox)

EXCLUSIONS FOR HEALTH REASONS

Students will be excused from school for the following health reasons:

1. Communicable diseases (i.e., strep throat, chicken pox, etc.)
2. Undiagnosed skin rashes
3. Untreated eye infections
4. Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
5. Vomiting
6. Doctor, clinic, or dentist appointments. We encourage that these appointments are made after school hours whenever possible.

We appreciate your cooperation in these important matters. Please do not hesitate to call the nurse if you have questions.

MEDICATIONS

Prescribed medications may be given by the nurse in school. Contact the nurse for details and the required procedures. Over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen can only be given by the school nurse and only with written authorization from the parent. Students must not carry any medication (prescribed or over-the-counter) with them during the school day unless specific documentation is completed. See the M.R.A. nurse for details.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND SCREENINGS

Students are required to have a physical exam prior to entrance into grade 7 and also prior to entrance into grade 11. Students entering grade 7 may have their physical exam completed between January 1 of grade 5 to prior to entering grade 7. Students entering grade 11 may have their physical exam completed between July 1 following their grade 8 year to the end of grade 10. *Students will be excluded from class until verification of the state mandated physical exam is received by the school nurse.*

All students are screened for vision and hearing at school in the fall. Scoliosis screening will be done on all students in grades 7, 8, and 9.

IMMUNIZATIONS

State Law requires that all students must be properly immunized against:

Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus (DPT or DaPT)

Polio: 3 doses with one dose after age 4.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella: 2 doses prior to grade 7

Varicella: 1 dose prior to grade 7 or a statement from a health care provider stating that the student had the disease.

Hepatitis: 1 dose prior to grade 7 and a series of 3 doses completed prior to grade 8.

PREGNANCY

Students who become pregnant remain entitled to all school privileges. If a student's pregnancy may affect educational progress, the student should notify her counselor so that a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) can be convened to determine what, if any, special arrangements should be made.

TO CONTACT THE SCHOOL NURSE

If you have health concerns/issues that you need to discuss or if your student does not have health insurance coverage and you would like some information about the Husky Plan, you may contact the school nurse at: Phone # (860) 647-3497 or Fax # (860) 647-3506.

Notice Regarding Restraints and Seclusion in Public Schools

Effective October 1, 2007, state law now places limits on the use of seclusion and physical restraint. As part of this law, local [and regional] boards of education are required to notify parents and guardians at each initial planning and placement team meeting of the laws relating to physical restraint and seclusion pursuant to Public Act 07-147, along with the rights of such parents/guardians under such laws and any regulations adopted by the State Board of Education relating to physical restraint and seclusion.

For purposes of this law, “physical restraint” is defined as any mechanical or personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the free movement of a person’s arms, legs or head. The term does not include: (1) briefly holding a person in order to calm or comfort the person; (2) restraint involving the minimum contact necessary to safely escort a person from one area to another; (3) medical devices, including, but not limited to, supports prescribed by a health care provider to achieve proper body position or balance; (4) helmets or other protective gear used to protect a person from injuries due to a fall; or (5) helmets, mitts and similar devices used to prevent self injury when the device is part of a documented treatment plan or individualized education program and is the least restrictive means available to prevent such self-injury.

For purposes of this law, “seclusion” means the confinement of a person in a room, whether alone or with staff supervision, a manner that prevents the person from leaving.

Local boards of education are required to notify parents or guardians of each incident in which such child is placed in physical restraint or seclusion. Local boards of education are also required to (1) record each instance of the use of physical restraint or seclusion on a special education student and the nature of the emergency that necessitated its use, and (2) include such information in an annual compilation on its use of such restraint and seclusion that is provided to the State Department of Education.

Under state law, local boards of education may not involuntarily place a child, who is receiving special education, or a child being evaluated for eligibility for special education and awaiting a determination in seclusion except (1) as an emergency intervention to prevent immediate or imminent injury to the person or to others, provided the seclusion is not used for discipline or convenience and is not used as a substitute for a less restrictive alternative, or (2) as specifically provided for in an individualized education program.

EQUITY MISSION STATEMENT

District

The mission of the Manchester Public Schools is to ensure that students become responsible citizens who will be successful in a rapidly changing world. Through an active partnership of students, school personnel, families and community, the Manchester Public Schools strive to create safe and inclusive schools defined as places where equity is the norm, excellence is the goal, and achievement cannot be predicted by race or other demographics.

EQUITY MISSION STATEMENT

Manchester Regional Academy

Systemic Racism is the most devastating factor contributing to the diminished capacity of all children, especially Black and Brown children, and leads to the fracturing of the communities that nurture and support them (Pacific Educational Group, Inc.)

The mission of the Manchester Public Schools and Manchester Regional Academy is to assure that the students become responsible citizens who will be successful in a rapidly-changing world. Through an active partnership of students, school personnel, families and the community, we strive to create safe and inclusive schools defined as places where equity is the norm, excellence is the goal, and achievement cannot be predicted by race or other demographics.

Belief Statements

We believe that:

- *Anti-racist leadership is essential to ensure equity for all*
- *Achievement cannot be predicted by race or other demographics*
- *Racism, conscious or unconscious, hurts us all and eliminating racism will benefit everyone*
- *Current district and school-wide practices will be consistently improved upon so that practices will not benefit some and disadvantage others*
- *School communities must engage in creating the change including those who have historically benefited from systemic racism*
- *All staff will create the conditions for equity and excellence for all learners*
- *All students can learn to their fullest potential when they are effectively taught how to learn and held to high expectations*
- *Each staff member must examine institutional beliefs and effect systemic change in policies, practices, and structures that perpetuate inequities based on race and class*
- *Every individual in the school-community-family partnership deserves respect*
- *Students of all abilities are capable of higher academic achievements*
- *Each staff member must reflect on his / her beliefs and perceptions about race and use these insights to transform instructional design and delivery*
- *Each staff must use appropriate, progressive discipline procedures to meet the needs of all children*
- *We will not be excellent until all students are achieving at high levels*